NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
FY-2001-5 YEAR IT PLAN

Major Accomplishments

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has made significant accomplishments in the areas of Information Resource Management (IRM) and Information Technology (IT).

The NHTSA mission drives information technology requirements and directs attention to the opportunities that information technology capabilities offer to improve mission accomplishment. To seize opportunities and meet the challenges of the coming years, NHTSA has provided quality information resource management, leadership in the field of information technology, and organizational effectiveness demonstrated by collaborative approaches to establishing internal standards and problem solving.

Our E-Government effort includes two initiatives, E-Commerce and Paperless Office, established in response to the Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998. The ultimate goal is to improve customer service and government efficiency through the use of information technology. This improvement involves transacting business electronically with Federal agencies and widespread use of the Internet and its World Wide Web.

In keeping with the Administration's Strategic Plan developed in the fall of 1998, several other OTIM initiatives have come to fruition. In the spring of 2000, we produced the first annual report of the Strategic Plan. The information was portrayed in an easily-read report which featured major NAD accomplishments mapped to established goals/strategies.

Another strategic effort was the development and distribution of a NHTSA first, Customer Satisfaction Survey. Based on the comments and concerns raised in the survey, OTIM revamped some aspects of the way we approached issues relating to our customers. During the past performance year, we upgraded PC's throughout the Agency to make them compatible with growing computer technology. In addition, IT training was improved in the areas of security awareness, number of courses offered and easy access to registration via Webster.

The agency satisfied congressional, Departmental and public inquiries regarding potential effects of Y2K on motor vehicles by requesting and publishing Y2K readiness letters from auto manufacturers on NHTSA's web-site. Y2K activities also included meeting due dates for completion of all critical phases, upgraded the e-mail software, replaced computers, national and international outreach,

conducting an agency-wide requirement analysis, performing executive briefings and responding to all OMB quarterly updates and Congressional inquiries.

NHTSA's web site continues to be a major source for educating the public on motor vehicle safety information. We have expanded this outreach by developing a site specifically geared toward educating children on important safety precautions and tips. NHTSA Web site has become ever more popular with the number of hits now reaching over 15 million each month. An average of 700,000 visitors come to the site looking for auto safety, health, and vehicle equipment information monthly. This resulted from an increase in the variety of interesting information available and changes made to enhance the site. We had more than doubled our capacity by using two web servers and performed load balancing between them. This process distributes the load of the users between the two systems and provides faster access and better opportunities for the public to obtain vital information. A second data server was also added to provide redundancy for all data.

During FY 2000, National Automotive Sampling System has extended and expanded its electronic data systems with the addition and implementation of the new General Estimates System electronic system, the development and implementation of the Special Crash Investigations Management Information System, the initial development of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Large Truck Crash Causation System, increased infrastructure improvements, enhancement to the current National Automotive Sampling System, the National Automotive Sampling System and Special Crash Investigations Web database system, the CD version of the National Automobile Sampling System application and improved publication of crash cases.

The new electronic General Estimates System was developed in FY 1999 and implemented this year. This system utilizes the National Automotive Sampling System network and database infrastructure. The system decrease's error rates and improves the quality of the data. The General Estimates Oracle data is centrally available within 24 hours of entry. Over the next year, additional functions to the system will be developed to improve and enhance the ease of quality control of the data.

NHTSA's Hotline has upgraded their services by implementing the Apropos system. Apropos enables hotline management to prioritize, route and respond to customer interactions across multiple communications media based on a single set of business rules or safety initiatives. Hotline management can establish business rules to manage customer interactions based on their business value or service level. For example, management can, on a real-time basis, (1) route specific types of customer interactions to a call representative (rep) based on that rep's particular skills and (2) adjust the number of interactions and reps assigned to a queue to ensure maximum responsiveness to the customer.

Goals and Objectives

Our future objectives are to improve information technology tools and customer service. The agency will continue to provide and enhance a variety of training, developmental opportunities, and continuous improvement activities for employees through in-house and outside training courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences. Funding for education, as well as enhanced management development activities, will be continued. These activities are designed to enhance the skills of NHTSA staff and develop a workforce capable of handling the challenges of customers in the new millennium.

In September, NHTSA will begin conversion to Microsoft Office in order to comply with OST's requirement that each mode within the department migrate to a uniform platform (e.g., Microsoft Exchange, etc.) to have a seamless integration of e-mail and office automation throughout the department. This transition will require a replacement of e-mail, servers, software suites to adhere to OST's request for a department wide office automation system.

NHTSA is now in the process of instituting an Information Technology Architecture (ITA) Program, In harmony with the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996, OMB M-97-02 (Oct. 1996), and OMB M-97-16 June 1997). ITA programs establish an integrated, pro-active approach to information technology management. The ITA is a collaborative effort that will document relationships between NHTSA processes and information technology as well as establish an integrated framework to evolve, maintain, and acquire IT. This program will support the achievement of sound IT design goals, ensure compliance with federal mandates, position NHTSA to work with DOT regarding Department-wide objectives, optimize the fulfillment of NHTSA's mission and enforce the use of technology standards.

In order for our web site to continue to effectively provide safety related material to the public, several upgrades will have to occur. Analysis will be made to determine the optimum configuration for the web server environment. Computer capacity, memory requirements, disk storage capacity, estimated bandwidth, are all factors in upgrade design of the web configuration. Future capacity will be projected including providing the public with access via the web to: pedestrian cases, vehicle crash test reports, high speed video and reports for bio-mechanics tests.

Most Critical IT Investments

Our most critical IT system is investment is the IT infrastructure. The Office of Technology and Information Management (OTIM) provides support to carry out the day-to-day responsibilities of the agency and to support mission activities. Our performance in reducing the amount of time program offices spends on

administrative activities reduce NHTSA's overall operational costs. Programs which support these endeavors include: Telecommunications, Network and User Support, Applications Development and Systems Management Functions to the Administrative, Staff, Regional and Program Offices. Applications managed under this Item Include Acquisition Tracking, Contracts Management, Property Inventory, Electronic Mail, Word Processing, Travel Tracking, Correspondence Control, Web Internet and Intranet Support, Graphics Support, and a Variety of General Purpose PC Software Applications (Spreadsheet, Database, Graphics, Project Tracking Etc.).